

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. In an Office Action mailed May 10, 2005, the drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Claims 1-10 and 18-24 were allowed. Finally, Claims 12-17 were noted as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the notice of allowable subject matter.¹

1. Drawing Objections

The drawings were objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the reference numeral "77." Applicant regrets this oversight and has amended the drawing sheets accordingly. Specifically, the numeral "77" has been added to FIGURES 11 and 12. Replacement sheets, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(d) are submitted herewith.

In view of the foregoing amendments to FIGURES 11 and 12, applicant respectfully submits the present objection to the drawings has been overcome.

2. Claim Rejection

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,908,208, issued to McIlroy. It is noted with appreciation that Claims 12-17 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As set forth above, applicant has amended independent Claim 11 to include the limitations of

¹ Applicant once again acknowledges and appreciates the notice of allowable subject matter. However, with respect to the comments regarding Claim 18 and the rationale for its allowance, applicant disagrees with the suggestion that the method of Claim 18 is sequence dependent. Specifically, the Office Action appears to unintentionally suggest a timing sequence to the method of Claim 18, wherein it asserts that the method of Claim 18 "then [forms] a first cutting guide between the first end fitting and the second end fitting to guide the post insulation cutting and removal of a center segment of the pipe section." (Emphasis added). Applicant notes that the method of Claim 18 is not a sequential method and interpretation of this claim should not be construed as such.

dependent Claim 12 (indicated as allowable) and, therefore, respectfully submits that the rejection of Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is now moot. Claim 12 has been canceled.

3. New Claims

As noted, dependent Claims 12-17 were noted as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant submits herewith new independent claims which are certain dependent claims indicated as allowable rewritten into independent form. Specifically, new independent Claim 25 is dependent Claim 13 rewritten into independent form. New Claim 26 is dependent Claim 14 written into independent form. New Claim 27 is dependent Claim 16 written in independent form, and new Claim 28 is dependent Claim 17 written in independent form. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that new Claim 25-28 are allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Applicant requests the Examiner to telephone the undersigned with any remaining issues regarding this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

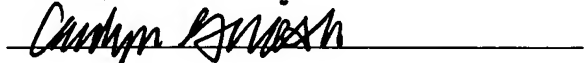
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service in a sealed envelope as first class mail with postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the below date.

Date: November 10, 2005



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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

FIGURES 11 and 12 have been amended to include the numeral "77."

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